

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ALGIER 01751 01 OF 03 141304Z
ACTION SS-25

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R 141030Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6818
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
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AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION USUN NY
CINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 ALGIERS 1751

EXDIS

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PDIP US, AG, SS, XF, SHUM
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR HAYNES MEETING WITH FON MIN BOUTEFLIKA
PRIOR TO PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS

1. SUMMARY: IN MY MEETING WITH HIM JUNE 22, FON MIN
BOUTEFLIKA: A. STRESSED SOUND ECONOMIC BASIS OF
U.S. ALGERIAN RELATIONS; B. NOTED THAT HE AND BOU-
MEDIENE LOOKING FORWARD TO VISITING US IN 1978; C. RE-
QUESTED THAT SECRETARY VISIT ALGERIA; D. PRAISED
U.S. STANCE ON MIDEAST AND NOTED
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PREFERENCE FOR DEALING WITH BEGIN WHOSE
CONSERVATIVE POSITION CLEAR AND WHO
LESS LIKELY TO VASCILATE THAN LIBERALS; E. SAID
GOA DID NOT SEE HOW IT COULD PLAY ROLE IN
REACHING MIDEAST SOLUTION OR HOW SUCH SOLUTION COULD
BE REACHED; F. NOTED THAT, GIVEN OUR HUMAN RIGHTS
CONCERNS, WE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO SUPPORT SAHRAOUI AND

SELF-DETERMINATION; G. INDICATED DISCOURAGEMENT WITH OAU AS FORUM FOR SOLVING SAHARA PROBLEM AND REQUESTED "BEHIND THE SCENES" U.S. MEDIATION ROLE. I WAS NOT ENCOURAGING ON U.S. MEDIATION IDEA.

2. BOUTEFELIKI'S PRESENTATION ON MIDEAST SUGGESTS THAT ALGERIANS WILL CONTINUE THEIR HANDS OFF POLICY IN REGION. ON SAHARA, WE MAY EXPECT ALGERIAN DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS THEME TO CONTINUE, AND, BOUTEFELIKI'S DISILLUSIONMENT WITH OAU NOT WITHSTANDING, GOA WILL DOUBTLESS DO UTMOST TO KEEP ITS DIPLO-MATIC CAMPAIGN ON SAHARA ALIVE IN THAT ORGANIZATION. END SUMMARY

3. ON TUESDAY EVENING, JULY 12, AT 8:45 PM I HAD A VERY CORDIAL FORTY-FIVE MINUTE MEETING WITH FONFIN IN COURSE OF WHICH I GAVE HIM SECRETARY VANCE'S LETTER TO HIM OF JUNE 22 (WHICH HE IMMEDIATELY READ) AS WELL AS COPIES OF MY LETTERS OF CREDENTIALS AND AMBASSADOR PARKER'S LETTERS OF RECALL, THE LATTER FOR THE PRESENTATION CEREMONY WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE THIS MORNING, JULY 13.

4. I WAS PRECEDED BY NEW AMBASSADOR OF GUINEA-BISSAU WHO SPENT ABOUT 10 MINUTES WITH FONMIN AND BY GREEK AMBASSADOR WHO SPENT ABOUT 20 MINUTES WITH HIM. I WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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FOLLOWED BY WEST GERMAN AMBASSADOR WHO ALSO SPENT FORTY-FIVE MINUTES WITH HIM. THESE MEETINGS REPRESENT A SIGNIFICANT DEPARTURE BY FONMIN FROM HIS LONG-STANDING PAST PRACTICES OF NOT SEEING ANY AMBASSADORS.

5. IN OUR EXCHANGE OF OPENING PLEASANTRIES, I REMINDED HIM THAT WE HAD PREVIOUSLY MET FIFTEEN YEARS AGO IN WASHINGTON ON THE SAD OCCASION OF THE FUNERAL OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY WHEN I WAS ESCORT OFFICER FOR ALGERIAN DELEGATION TO FUNERAL. HE REMEMBERED MEETING AND SAID THAT IT WAS NOW HIS TURN TO WELCOME ME TO HIS COUNTRY UNDER MUCH HAPPIER CIRCUMSTANCES. THIS LED HIM INTO HIS DISCUSSION OF SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES, A SUMMARY OF WHICH FOLLOWS:

6 US-ALGERIAN RELATIONS: FONMIN EXPRESSED PLEASURE WITH RECENT TURN FOR THE BETTER IN RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. HE STRESSED THAT COMMERCIAL BASIS FOR THIS IMPROVEMENT WAS PERHAPS A MORE SOLID ONE THAN AN IDEOLOGICAL BASIS BECAUSE MOTIVES INVOLVED ARE CLEAR AND BEYOND SUSPICION. HE EXPRESSED REGRET FOR DIFFERENCES WHICH HAVE DIVIDED US IN PAST. I RESPONDED THAT I COULD ASSURE HIM THAT MY GOVERNMENT WAS DEDICATED TO LOOKING

AHEAD AND ENSURING THAT THIS NEW CLIMATE IN OUR RELATIONS
ENDURES RATHER THAN BROODING OVER PAST. INDEED, I SAID,
MY PERSONAL EFFORTS AS AMERICAN AMBASSADOR WOULD BE
DEVOTED TO ENCOURAGING THIS FORWARD LOOK IN OUR RELATIONS.

7 BOUMEDIENE VISIT TO US: FONMIN WANTED US TO KNOW
THAT BOTH HE AND THE PRESIDENT ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO
ACCEPTING PRESIDENT CARTER'S INVITATION TO VISIT US IN
1978. I REPLIED THAT I WOULD SOON BE SUBMITTING A RANGE
OF DATES FOR VISIT FOR PRESIDENT'S CONSIDERATION, BUT
THAT IT WOULD PROBABLY BE SCHEDULED FOR SOME TIME IN
SPRING OF 1978.

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 ALGIERS 1751

EXDIS

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

8. SECRETARY VANCE VISIT TO ALGIERS: FONMIN SAID THAT,
IN A RECENT MEETING WITH HIM, SECRETARY VANCE HAD
PROMISED TO PAY A VISIT TO ALGERIA AT HIS EARLIEST
CONVENIENCE. HE SAID THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD WELCOME

SUCH A VISIT EVEN IF IT WERE A STOPOFF EN ROUTE TO OR FROM
NEAR EAST. HE REFERRED TO VALUE OF SUCH VISITS BY SECRETARY
KISSINGER IN PAST AS THEY AFFORDED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR
KIND OF DIRECT, HIGH-LEVEL, INFORMAL EXCHANGES BETWEEN
LEADERS THAT INCREASE UNDERSTANDING OF WORLD PROBLEMS AND
CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR SOLUTION. I ASSURED FONMIN THAT I
WOULD CONVEY HIS STANDING INVITATION TO SECRETARY VANCE.
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9. MIDDLE EAST CRISIS: FONMIN GAVE ME A LONG ANALYSIS OF
MIDDLE EAST CRISIS THE MAIN POINTS OF WHICH ARE OUTLINES
BELOW:

A. THE GOA IS VERY PLEASED WITH RECENT DEFINITION
OF US POLICY ON MIDDLE EAST WHICH IT FEELS IS WELL-
BALANCED AND FAIR.

B. HE WOULD RATHER DEAL WITH A CONSERVATIVE ISRAELI
LEADER LIKE BEGIN THAN WITH A MORE LIBERAL ISRAELI
LEADERSHIP BECAUSE BEGIN NEGOTIATING POSITION IS CLEAR
WHILE LIBERALS TEND TO VACILLATE. FONMIN URGES PRESIDENT
CARTER TO BE FIRM WITH BEGIN BECAUSE BEGIN WILL BEST
UNDERSTAND FIRMNESS IN THEIR COMING MEETING.

C. IN SAME VEIN, FONMIN CONSIDERS ISRAELI FONMIN
DAYAN MORE OF A "REALIST" THAN A HAWK BECAUSE OF
DAYAN'S DEEP PRIOR EXPERIENCE WITH MIDDLE EASTERN
COMPLEX OF PROBLEMS -- AN EXPERIENCE WHICH FONMIN
BELIEVES GIVES HIM A MORE SOBER JUDGMENT.

D. HE DESCRIBED EGYPT AS ONE OF WEAK LINKS IN ANY
POSSIBLE SOLUTION WHICH WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO PALESTINIANS
AS, SAID FONMIN, EGYPTIANS HAVE ALREADY "CAPITULATED" TO
ISRAEL AND ARE ONLY MANAGING TO STAY ALIVE BY BEING
PROPPED UP BY THEIR FRIENDS.

E. HE BEMOANED PERPETUAL DISARRAY OF ARAB COUNTRIES
WHO ARE PERPETUALLY AT EACH OTHER'S THROATS AND CITED LIBYA'S
PROBLEMS WITH EGYPT, TUNISIA AND CHAD AS WELL AS SYRIA'S
PROBLEMS WITH IRAQ AND LEBANESE CRISIS, FINISHING UP WITH
ALGERIA'S PROBLEMS WITH MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA.
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F. HE SIMILARLY BEMOANED LACK OF COOPERATION AMONG

PLAESTINIANS THEMSELVES WHOSE ALMOST RELIGIOUS DEDICATION TO REGAINING THEIR HOMELAND IS BLUNTED BY THEIR FACTIONALISM.

G. AS A RESULT OF (D), (E) AND (F) ABOVE, THE FONMIN ADMITTED FRANKLY THAT HIS GOVERNMENT FINDS IT DIFFICULT TO PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE ON ARAB SIDE IN ANY MIDDLE EASTERN SOLUTION.

H. FONMIN BELIEVES THAT ALL THOSE INVOLVED IN CRISIS WOULD GENUINELY LIKE TO REACH A SOLUTION THIS YEAR; BUT, BUT, HE WOULD NOT BEGIN TO SPECULATE ON WHAT BASIS A SOLUTION COULD BE REACHED.

10. WESTERN SAHARA: FONMIN WAS QUITE FORCEFUL IN HIS COMMENTS ON SAHARAN SITUATION AND EMPHASIZED SPECIFICALLY THAT HE HOPED I WOULD COMMUNICATE HIS VIEWS DIRECTLY TO MY GOVERNMENT:

A. HOW THAT CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF US FOREIGN POLICY, HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT US WOULD CHANGE ITS POSITION OF TRADITIONAL SUPPORT FOR MOROCCAN (AND IMPLICITY FOR MAURITANIANS) CLAIMS. HE FELT THAT OUR HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS SHOULD LEAVE US NO CHOICE BUT TO SUPPORT A POLICY OF SELF-DETERMINATION FOR SAHRAOUI.

B. HE APPRECIATED POINT I MADE TO HIM (ALSO MADE IN VANCE LETTER OF JUNE 22) THAT US WANTED TO SEE A SOLUTION TO THIS PROBLEM ARRIVED AT IN A REGIONAL CONTEXT. HOWEVER, HE STILL FELT THAT US SHOULD RESORT TO "SECRET DIPLOMACY" IN MEDIATING THIS SITUATION, EXPLOITING ITS INFLUENCE WITH MOROCCO AND IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH ALGERIA. SPEAKING FOR ALGERIA, FONMIN SAID THAT THEY WOULD MORE THAN WELCOME CONSTRUCTIVE, BEHIND-THE-SCENES US MEDIATION EFFORTS. (GIVEN OUR POSITION AS

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OUTLINED IN VANCE LETTER) I TOLD THE FONMIN THAT I DO SEE US PLAYING SUCH A ROLE.

C. I RAISED POINT THAT IT WOULD CERTAINLY BE UNWISE FOR ANY MEDIATING POWER TO INTERVENE AT THIS STAGE WHEN MATTER HAS BEEN MADE SUBJECT OF OAU SUMMIT CONSIDERATION IC OCTOBER. HE IMMEDIATELY DISCREDITED OAU'S "FEEBLE AND UNSUCCESSFUL EFFORTS" AT RESOLVING SUCH REGIONAL PROBLEMS. HE SAID THAT MOST ONE COULD EXPECT OF AN OAU SUMMIT WOULD BE SUBMISSION TO AD HOC COMMITTEE FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION AND MORE INORDINATE DELAY.

D. MEANWHILE, FONMIN SAID, IT IS MAURITANIA THAT STANDS TO SUFFER AND LOSE MOST IN THIS SITUATION. THIS

PAINED HIM, HE SAID, BECAUSE OF ALGERIA'S PAST CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH MAURITANIA AND ITS PRESIDENT. WHAT HS FEARS MOST IS THAT, IF OULD DADDAH IS TOPPLED AS A RESULT OF SAHARA PROBLEM, MAURITANIA WILL BE ABSORBED, IN EFFECT, BY MOROCCO. IN PAST ALGERIA HAS EVEN FOUND ITSELF ALIGNED WITH MAURITANIA AGAINST MOROCCO.

E. FONMIN DISCLAIMED ANY ALGERIAN INTEREST IN ACQUIRING WESTERN SAHARA TERRITORY. HE FURTHER SAID THAT ALGERIAN ACCESS TO ATLANTIC OCEAN COULD JUST AS EASILY BE NEGOTIATED WITH A FRIENDLY GOVERNMENT.

F. FONMIN REFUSED TO SPECULATE AS TO HOW LONG POLISARIO EFFORT COULD BE SUSTAINED, SAYING ONLY THAT SAHRAOUI ARE A LONG-SUFFERING PEOPLE WHOSE PATIENCE AND DETERMINATION SHOULD NOT BE MINIMIZED.

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R 141030Z JUL 77
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EXDIS

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11. COMMENT: FONMIN CONCLUDED OUR MEETING BY ASKING ME TO CONTACT HIM DIRECTLY WHENEVER I ENCOUNTERED A SERIOUS PROBLEM IN ALGERIA. I TOLD HIM THAT I HOPED THAT WE MIGHT ALSO HAVE A CHANCE TO MEET PERIODICALLY WHEN OUR RELATIONS WERE GOING WELL AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT WE MIGHT HAVE FUTURE FRANK EXCHANGES. IN DISCUSSION WITH FRENCH AMBASSADOR AFTER MY MEETING WITH FONMIN, FRENCH AMBASSADOR CONFIRMED FONMIN HAD PRESENTED SAME SCENARIO TO HIM ON MIDDLE EAST CIRIS AND WESTERN SAHARA AS HE PRESENTED TO ME. (N.B. FRENCH AMBASSADOR HAS HAD ONLY ONE PERSONAL MEETING WITH FONMIN IN MORE THAT TWO
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YEARS IN ALGIERS AND THAT MEETING ONLY TWO WEEKS AGO.)

12. COMMENT: BOUTEFLIKA'S PRESENTATION ON THE MIDEAST STRONGLY SUGGESTS THAT THE ALGERIANS INTEND TO CONTINUE THEIR HANDS OFF POLICY IN THE REGION. HIS REMARKS ON BEGIN AND DAYAN WHICH STRIKE ME AS QUITE CANDID, DO NOT ACCORD WITH THE OFFICIAL GOA LINE WHICH IS TO TREAT LIKUD AS DANGEROUS, TERRORIST ORGANIZATION AND DAYAN AS UNCOMPROMISING HARDLINER.

13. AS I PREDICTED IN ALGIERS 1645 (NOTAL) ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE, ALGERIANS HAVE LOST NO TIME IN EXPLOITING LOGIC OF ITS APPLICATION TO WESTERN SAHARA SITUATION. THEY CAN BE EXPECTED TO DO SO AGAIN IN PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS WITH US AS WELL AS IN PUBLIC INTERNATIONAL FORUMS SUCH AS UN.

14. DESPITE HIS PROFESSIONS OF DISCOURAGEMENT WITH OAU AS FORUM FOR SETTLING SAHARA QUESTION, GOA WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY DO ALL IT CAN TO KEEP ITS DIPLOMATIC CAMPAIGN ALIVE IN THAT ORGANIZATION. AS IN PARA-MILITARY AND PARA-MILITARY SPHERE, ALGERIANS APPEAR TO BE READY TO GO ON WITH SAHARA FOR AS LONG AS IT TAKES, AND KEEPING THEIR AFRICAN BRETHREN SEIZED OF QUESTION IS INTEGRAL PART OF THEIR STRATEGY AS IS THE EXPLOITATION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS ASPECT OF THE QUESTION.HAYNES

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